

[Mrs. Juan Valdes]

Marie Carter

Anthony, N. Mex.

700 words

OLD TIMERS STORIES

Mrs. Jaun Juan Valdes (husband; Juan Valdez

Interview; May 18, 1937

Juliana Valdez, or Mrs. Juan Valdez, smiled as she informed me with a slight accent; "I was born in La Union, senora; my childhood, girlhood and womanhood, have been spent at the old Mission, La Union. You see, senora, that is what they called it in the old days when the first settlers colonized this valley. La Union is the foundation if the Refugio Grant."

Juan Valdez affirmed Juliana's statement with a nod, and smiled as she resumed: "I was born in 1879 on the 9th day of January. That is a long time, senora. My father was Jesus Enriquez; my mother was Luz Noreigo de Enriquez. The immigrated to the United States from Juarez, Chihuahue, Mexico; then up the Rio Grande Valley to La Union. They, my parents, were very fine people. "She volunteered with pride.

Library of Congress

In speaking of her husband Juliana said: "Juan was born in Mason, Texas, 1880 on the 5th dya of February. Then, senora, he came to La Union to fall in love, and has been here ever since. You see how he sits and watches me? Well, he did that before we were married. One day I said Jaun why do you watch me all the time?"

"Juliana,' he said, 'I can't help it; I want to marry you,'

"Bueno!' I said, 'let's get married. Maybe you will stop watching me.' But it didn't work, senora. All these years he has done nothing else.

2

Including the whole country with a wave of her hand, Juliana continued; "When my parents came here that was all bosque, or woodland. Many people left Chihuahua when they learned that they could got plenty of free land in New Mexico. My father was one of the commissioners for the Refugio Corporation. Some of the Americans called their grants "terrenas" but the correct name is Terreno. Instead of a terreno being fifty-four acres, as some of them thought, it was between thirty-six or thirty-seven acres. And a vara, by which the colonists measured the land, was not a yard of thirty-six inches, but thirty-three inches."

Juliana didn't have any more respect for the ruthless Rio Grande of the past than her neighbors, for she referred to it as: "The big fussy river. "Senora," she said; "it was never still, for there was nothing to hold it back. Sometimes it would suddenly dry up; then our crops would dry up. Then we would worry and pray for water, and bah, a flood would come and almost destroy us. Ah, senora, I know this country well. I am part of it. I have spent the beet part of my life helping to make it what it is today. Fighting the wind, turning the soil, hating and loving the river, planting the seed, watching it grow. Si, senora. I, like the rest, have suffered, but I think it is a pretty fine country."

Library of Congress

Juliana, or Mrs. Juan Valdez, was born in La Union, New Mexico, Dona Ana County: January 9, 1878; Juan Valdez Sr. was born in Mason, Texas, Mason County: February 5, 1880, and went to La Union, New Mexico in 1900. Jesus Enriquez, who immigrated from Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico to La Union, New Mexico in 1877, was the father of Mrs. Juan Valdez Sr. Mrs. Luz Noreigo de Enriquez, wife of Jesus Enriquez, who immigrated 3 from Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico in 1877, was the mother of Mrs Juan Valdez Sr.

Mr. and Mrs. Juan Valdez are the parents of: Robert, Juan Jr., Magadelena and David Valdez. Robert Valdez, who was a teacher and principal of the La Union School for several years, is now the States Corporation Commissioner for New Mexico. He was recently appointed Chairman of the New Mexico State Corporation Commission by Governor Clyde Tingley, to represent New Mexico at the Juarez-Chihuahua Road meet to boost for the Juarez-Chihuahua-Mexico City Highway, May 14, 1937. Robert Valdez married Nellie Nevarez of Las Cruces, New Mexico. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Valdez live in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Juan Valdez Jr., second son of Mr. and Mrs. Juan Valdez Sr., is a farmer of La Union, New Mexico. Juan married Katy Medena of Las Cruces, New Mexico. Magadelena Valdez is at home with her parents. David Valdez, who was graduated from the La Union Valley High School in the class of 1935, and attended the L & N State College of New Mexico in 1936, married Annie Marie Ames of Las Cruces. David is associated with his father in farming at the home ranch in La Union, New Mexico.